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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

March 3, 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR CIA: Mr. Wisner

Subject: Mr. Gray's Report to the President

Mr. Phillips and I have reviewed Gordon Gray's report to the President and your memorandum to the Director of Central Intelligence dealing with this report. We are in general agreement with your recommendations, with one important exception.

Specifically: 1) We believe it would be useful to publish portions of this report; and 2) we strongly endorse the suggestion that publication of the report should be accompanied by Presidential statement on how we are doing.

The exception to your recommendations that we suggest is the following: You seem to suggest that we are going to do a lot of writing and rewriting without consulting Gordon Gray. I think we are entitled to recommend that sentences, paragraphs or whole sections should be cut out for security or other reasons. But I question the advisability of rewriting, unless Gordon himself is asked to do it. He would have every right to complain very strongly. This is why we do not go along with some of the proposed changes.

Here are the detailed comments that Joe Phillips makes on the report. I have looked them over and they seem to me to be about right. I am also attaching Joe's copy of your memorandum with marginal notes indicating the points on which he agrees and disagrees. Joe told me that he made his comments before reading your memorandum and then found that he is in agreement with you on all the major deletions. Mr. Phillips' comments follow:

Preamble and Background sections (pp.1 - 5). Pretty negative, but Gordon feels that way and it is his report -

Origins of PSB (pp. 6 - 9): Omit Para. 3.

Omit para. 6, 7, 8. Para. 18 is questionable, and seems to be contradicted by the first para. of the section, PSB Today (P. 14). In any case, the last sentence of the para. 18 should be dropped.

Some Misconceptions: (Pp.10-11). This whole section should be left out.

PSB Concept (pp. 12-13): First sentence should end at the word "conclusions."

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

FROM : Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Psychological Strategy Board; Mr. Gray's Report
to the President dated 22 February 1952.

Pursuant to your oral instruction of 27 February, I submit herewith my conclusions and recommendations with respect to the inquiry contained in Admiral Dennison's memorandum dated 25 February 1952. In this memorandum I am presenting for your consideration my analysis and general conclusions relative to Mr. Gray's report, together with recommendations as to the desirability of releasing the report for publication, and concluding with a further section making specific comment upon and suggesting the deletion or modification of certain portions of the language.

I.

Analysis and General Conclusions
Relative to Mr. Gray's Report.

Taken as a whole, the document is a good and substantially accurate presentation of the background and development of the Psychological Strategy Board. Actually it is less a report on "organization and work" than it is a justification for the creation and continuance of the PSB and a platform for an exhortation to reform and correct inter-agency friction. There are certain statements and some recommendations which are open to question and concerning which opinion would differ, depending upon where one sat. It would appear that the principal reasons for Mr. Gray's recommending publication of the report are as follows:

- a. To assure a more widespread and satisfactory public and congressional comprehension and acceptance of the manner in which and the methods by which this Government's efforts in the psychological warfare field are being conducted;
- b. To create a climate of public and congressional opinion more favorable to the obtainment of support for an extensive and costly campaign of propaganda and related measures which are deemed essential to

the maintenance

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the maintenance and improvement of our world position;
and

c. To obtain popular support for certain principles and to attempt to eliminate or break down certain believed errors in current governmental thinking and practice, e.g. departmental jurisdictional jealousies and rigid and inadequate attitudes and philosophies toward policy and the development of a "strategic" approach.

The above-mentioned objectives are generally desirable, but obviously require for their attainment the exercise of careful judgment as to what is said and how it is put.

It is considered that portions of the report can be used as a basis for arriving at a document which, when published, would do much to attain the first two mentioned objectives.

I would endorse the publication of the substance of the report, after the elimination of the sensitive and controversial matters--undesirable and unnecessary to be considered publicly--and the addition of certain strengthening material.

Representing the position at the end of eight months of the Board's overt history, and coinciding with the change of Directors, the report could be modified into a suitable vehicle to express to the American public, the Congress and the rest of the world the problems faced, the work so far accomplished, and "The Task Ahead."

The last-mentioned section of the report, particularly, could be rounded out into an eloquent appeal by the President to the American public and, indeed, the world, provided that the President should agree that such a message is appropriate and desirable at this time. An elaboration by the President (possibly at a special news conference) of certain themes which Mr. Gray has introduced might well serve to clarify the thinking of certain sections of the American public and that of our European allies which are not yet fully persuaded that the vigorous nature of United States policy with respect to the cold war is completely justified.

These conclusions are reached after careful consideration of certain foreseeable disadvantages, such as the provision of

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a certain amount of provocation and fodder for hostile propaganda machines. I have no doubt that even with the most careful selection of material from the report and the employment of the most discreet wording in the public release (if it is to be so written as to accomplish any useful purpose at all), the report will become the subject of attack by the Russians and their Communist associates, and even by the woolly-minded liberals and "neutralists" of the Free World. These propaganda mechanisms and organs of public expression will surely distort the report and will point to it as "further and convincing evidence" of the chauvinistic and domineering position and attitude of the United States Government. On balance, however, it is my judgment that the advantages to be gained by the publication of selected portions of the report, together with certain additions to and modifications of the language, would considerably outweigh the presently foreseeable disadvantages.

II.

Recommendations.

1. That the proposed changes be discussed with the members of the ad hoc committee of representatives created for this purpose, as a basis for the committee's own analysis of the subject report and their recommendations as to its publication.
2. That you recommend that the substance of the report be published after the proposed changes are made.
3. That you recommend to the President that the release of the published report be the occasion for him to make an important public statement covering a reassertion of the controlling principles, policies, and the reasons why we are engaged in the cold war.

III.

Proposed Changes.

The annex hereto contains the changes which I believe to be desirable. The principal changes are concerned with certain portions of the report which I would regard as too revealing of sensitive information and relationships and even in some cases as invidious and provocative--more apt to stir up discord than to produce harmony--and therefore to be deleted. In the last

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mentioned category, the report infers a number of inter-agency differences and disputes that would not improve with public airing. Moreover, there are portions of the report which would invite undeserved and unwarranted criticism of the Government—criticism for having done less by a great deal than is actually the case in the realization of the need for and the development of machinery to carry out psychological warfare measures.

Finally, with regard to the series of concrete recommendations set forth in the report (principally at Page 15), whereas certain of these recommendations have definite merit, it seems to me it would be a mistake to publish them prior to a final determination as to which of the recommendations will be adopted and which will not. To make premature public disclosure of the recommendations would tend to limit the freedom of choice of the President and the Board, as well as to become a source of some embarrassment to all concerned, including Mr. Gray himself.

FRANK G. WISNER

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ANNEX A.

Proposed Changes.

1. The section of the Report entitled "Some Misconceptions," (Pages 10 and 11) should be deleted in its entirety, as containing too much matter of a sensitive nature, involving inter-agency differences and controversial issues. If published, this section would indeed have "news value", but it would be of a harmful nature in the long run. *yes*

2. Similarly, the section of the report entitled "The PSB Concept" contains language at several points which refers back to the "Some Misconceptions" section and the sensitive matters recited in the preceding section -- the deletion of which in its entirety has been recommended above. Accordingly such language in "The PSB Concept" section should be deleted or revised. *yes, but not under*

3. The last paragraph at the foot of Page 6 and the first two paragraphs of Page 7 should be likewise deleted, as too revealing of controversy and as an unsatisfactory characterization of the final decision. *yes*

4. In lieu of the matters in the last three paragraphs which we would delete, there should be an affirmative statement, as follows:

"In seeking an answer to questions like these, high officials of the Government became convinced that there was an urgent need for better and more unified leadership for our effort. After full consideration of the various proposals which were advanced for the solution of this problem, the President issued a directive ordering some of the highest officials of the Government to provide for "the more effective planning, coordination and conduct, within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations." The issuance of the Presidential Directive was announced to the public on or about June 20, 1951."

no, except what was the date?

5. The Report needs -- and probably in the section "The Psychological Strategy Board Today" -- a general affirmative statement of the state of organization and activities of the Board, and the work, findings and accomplishments of its four principal offices. *?*

6. The first three paragraphs on Page 15 involving the Board's recommendations, should be deleted for the reasons set forth on Page , or should be replaced by a simple general statement to the effect that organizational and procedural changes are being considered to improve the effectiveness of the Board. *yes*

7. Throughout

7. Throughout the report there is too much emphasis upon the exclusive and preponderant role of the United States, and too little reference to the part which must be played and the contribution which must be made by the other nations of the Free World. At points this emphasis upon the dominating position of the United States goes so far as to be offensive to our friends and allies and to provide the opposition with ammunition for charges of "U. S. imperialism" and ambitions of "world domination." See the last two paragraphs of Page 5, the fourth and fifth paragraphs on Page 6, and the last sentence of the fourth paragraph on Page 12. In the same connection and for the same reason there might be some modification of the second and third paragraphs on Page 1. It is also thought that more affirmative emphasis should be placed on the establishment of the democratic free way of life, and that the attacks should be expanded to Communism generally, reducing the preoccupation with expressed antagonism towards the Kremlin indicated in the Report.

NO - 125

8. The first and second paragraphs at the top of Page 6 are written in such a way as to cause it to appear that the Government did not awaken to an adequate realization of the danger until much later than was actually the case. Accordingly there should be some modification of this language to stress the point that the need for an over-all strategic plan and a better mechanism of coordination is what was involved at the time.

*NO - 125
perhaps 125
sentence 7
125 from*

9. In this same connection there is a serious question as to the desirability from a psychological standpoint of including in a document such as this the somewhat defeatist and negative statement that the "reservoir of good will" for the United States which had existed in many countries, was being seriously depleted. (See last paragraph, last sentence on Page 5.)

per -

10. The last sentence on Page 9 contains a very invidious note, viz. the inference being that although we had not planned it that way, we are now forcing a cold war conflict upon the world. This sentence should be revised to read as follows:

*NO - 125
the whole
para -*

"As we Americans had not fully digested the fact that this kind of conflict would be forced upon the world, we had not trained large numbers of personnel in preparation for it."

11. Certain of the language in the fourth complete paragraph on Page 4 gives support to the Soviet claim of "encirclement". It would be much better to phrase this differently, e.g. to say that the United States has assisted the free nations of Europe in the strengthening of their defenses against Communist aggression.

NO -

12. Similarly,

12. Similarly, I am concerned about misinterpretation and misuse of the expression "to influence men's minds and wills", as it appears in the fourth paragraph on Page 7, and the first paragraph on Page 8, is of doubtful wisdom. This expression contains a suggestion or implication that we are seeking to bend the necks of other peoples to conform to our desires, or in some sinister manner to undermine their independence of thought and action. The same general objection applies to the use of the word "pressure" in the next-to-the-last line of the first complete paragraph on Page 13. *yes*

13. There is some question as to the good taste and desirability of allowing to appear in a public document of this degree of dignity such terms or expressions as the following:

"assassination" -- last line of third paragraph, Page 3. *yes, but only because it implies do not know in that manner*

"Shook down" -- penultimate sentence of fourth paragraph, Page 3. *no*

"blackmail" -- fourth-from-last line of first complete paragraph, Page 4. *no -*

14. In the second sentence of the third paragraph on Page 12, it is stated that "they [the Director and Staff] felt, particularly, that their instructions to stay out of operational matters were sound". The following sentence continues with this same line of thought. It should be noted in this connection that the public release concerning the Presidential Directive contained no reference to the determination that PSB would not engage in operations. This matter could be cleared up most easily by a slight modification of the last sentence of this paragraph, and the elimination of reference to instructions to stay out of operational matters. *? (check this)*

15. The parenthetical language at the end of the second paragraph on Page 14 should obviously be eliminated, and consideration should be given to reducing the specificity of the balance of this and the following paragraph(s) because of security considerations. *omit all but 1st sentence but keep 1st phrase*

16. The word "exactly" in the second line of the last paragraph on Page 7 is too precise and all-embracing.

17. The last paragraph on Page 16 should be examined closely with a view to revision for the sake of greater clarity. It is not clear what failures are referred to. *no - print it*